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OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND

AN ADDRESS
DELIVERED AT RURIDECANAL CONFERENCES
IN THE DIOCESE OF LONDON

During the months of November and December 1898

WITH AN APPENDIX

BY

MANDELL CREIGHTON, D.D.

BISHOP OF LONDON

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*JUST PUBLISHED. With a Photogravure reproduction of the Bust of
Dr. Pusey, by Mr. George Richmond, R.A., now in the Library of the
Pusey House, Oxford. 8vo., price 12s. 6d.*

SPIRITUAL LETTERS OF EDWARD BOUVERIE PUSEY

Doctor of Divinity, Canon of Christ Church, Regius Professor of
Hebrew in the University of Oxford.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IN the Preface to the fourth volume of Dr. PUSEY'S 'Life,' the Editors expressed their intention of publishing a volume of his Spiritual Letters. They pointed out that their task would not be complete without some such addition. Dr. PUSEY spent a considerable portion of his life in dealing, whether by word of mouth or by letter, with the difficulties of individual souls; but in the record of his busy years, no room could be found for any suitable recognition of this side of his work, without unduly interrupting the course of the narrative. It was felt, therefore, that a small collection of his Spiritual Letters could alone supply this gap in the account of his life. Hence it will be understood by all who have sympathetically followed the long course of the biography, that this volume is properly a

necessary supplement to the work on which Dr. LIDDON spent so many years ; yet it is issued in a separate form, partly because it is in itself independent, and partly because its contents will probably appeal to many people who have not had the time, nor perhaps the inclination, to read the other volumes, which deal so largely in matters of modern ecclesiastical history and the tangle of theological controversy.

The title which has been given to this volume, in its more narrow meaning, is really descriptive of the greater part of its contents. It consists chiefly of letters of advice with regard to the trials of the spiritual life. As is remarked in the Preface : ‘Such trials bear no special marks of time or place. They reappear everywhere in similar forms from generation to generation ; and letters which deal with them have therefore a universal and an undying interest. But with intellectual questions the case is different ; the special form which is assumed by the difficulties which the intellect has to face in confronting religious questions varies with almost every decade. Young men of to-day can hardly understand how the great perplexities which confronted their fathers’ early manhood can ever have been true occasions of distress. The solution seems to them too obvious and easy. They have inherited the land without passing through that part of the wilderness. Yet the wilderness was great and terrible for many years ; and the value of the letters of consolation and guidance which were then written can only be understood by those who fully know the precise juncture at which they were written. Hence comparatively few of Dr. PUSEY’S letters on the intellectual difficulties of twenty years ago, and of yet earlier dates, are printed in this volume.

‘On the other hand, the controversy with the Church of Rome is represented here with comparative fulness. It is true that Dr. PUSEY has dealt with the whole question in the three volumes of his “Eirenicon” ; yet each of those volumes is influenced by its having been written with a special purpose, in consequence of some controversial publication or historical event. But the questions at issue between the Church of England and the Church of Rome remain always essentially the same.’

John G. Falder
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It is well that I should begin my remarks by making clear to you the exact object which I have in view. I can do so best by telling you how the subject on which I propose to address you was suggested to my own mind. I was talking to a Candidate for Ordination, who was going out to work in the Mission Field in India. He said to me: ‘I wish that I had a clear answer to the question “What is the position of the Church of England in Christendom?”’ I know the claim of the Church of Rome—that it is a universal and divinely appointed institution, to which all men must belong. I know the claim of the Greek Church, that it preserves the Catholic Faith, and sets it forth in ancient forms, intelligible to simple people. I do not know any corresponding formula to describe the position of the Church of England.’

It may seem to you odd that such a question should be asked, or that there should be any difficulty in supplying an answer. - But the English mind is not fertile in definitions, and we are apt to rejoice in our

freedom from the restraints of mere logic. The test of our institutions is their general adaptability to the work which they have to do. We judge them by the way in which they satisfy our own needs, not by the ease with which we can explain them to others. There is no ready definition of the British Constitution, nor, indeed, of any part of our national institutions. The Church of England has never undertaken to define its relations to other bodies, or to put forth any claims for universal acceptance. It was in the first instance avowedly an expression of the religious consciousness of the English people; and its position in the world depends upon its power of educating that consciousness to a true sense of its destiny.

In attempting to set forth the principles of the Church of England I will use the plainest and least technical language. I may say at once that I repudiate all inferences which may be drawn from my phraseology. I am simply trying to discover the distinguishing features of the English Church as contrasted with other forms adopted for the organisation of the Catholic Church. They all have in common the great truths of the Christian Faith; they are all one in the Unity of the Spirit. There is unity between them, but it is not structural unity. It seems to me that a good understanding will best be reached by abandoning all attempts at reaching in any measurable time, and by any definite means, a unity of structure, and by a dispassionate comparison of modes of working and of objects pursued.

However much men may agree about the fundamental truths of the Christian Faith we must expect

them to differ about the methods of teaching these truths and the way in which they are best brought home to individual souls. As a matter of fact differences exist about the organisation of the Church as a teaching body; and we often forget that all teaching must stand in some relation to the capacities of those who are to be taught, and the degree to which their education can be carried. I am not engaged in setting forth the entire position of the Church of England towards all questions of theology, but merely its distinctive characteristics when contrasted with other religious organisations.

If we consider the prevalent views on this subject, I think they may be divided into three.

(1) The system of the Church of England is mainly that of continental Protestantism, which was partially arrested in this country by motives of political expediency.

(2) The Church of England is the Church of the Middle Ages, with its system somewhat mutilated by the steps which were necessary to get rid of the Papal supremacy. Now that the Papal supremacy and all its political consequences are past and gone, the careful restoration of some features of the ancient system, which were discarded through dread of Popery, is desirable.

(3) The Church of England is a compromise between two opposite tendencies of religious thought; and just as there are two political parties which keep one another in order, so there are two religious parties between whom the bishops must keep an even balance.

I cannot myself accept any of these views. The

Church of England seems to me to have a very decided position of its own—the noblest which can be taken by any institution, but through its very loftiness easily capable of misrepresentation and of misunderstanding. I will try to explain my meaning.

The formula which most explains the position of the Church of England is that it rests on an appeal to sound learning. It may be said that this is an arrogant claim. Why should learning be the special prerogative of the English Church? To answer this question we must consider what took place in the sixteenth century, when the services and formularies of the Church of England were revised. During the Middle Ages, the Church of England was a portion of the Western Church, and shared in all its movements, though maintaining a certain aloofness, owing to its insular position. There were always in the Western Church two somewhat different lines of thought. One was concerned with maintaining and expressing popular devotion, the other with the great principles of the Catholic Faith. There came a time when these two tendencies became conscious of antagonism. The theology of the Schoolmen which had grown up to explain the practices which seemed necessary to meet popular demands was exposed to the criticism of those whom the Revival of Learning had led to a more intelligent study of the records of early times. There was, on the one side, a massive system of logical theology which was difficult to attack on its own grounds. There was, on the other side, a growing sense that the ecclesiastical system which it maintained was obscuring rather than illustrating the vital principles on which the Christian life is founded.

In the fifteenth century futile attempts were made to reform the overgrown system of the Church. They failed, because the logical fabric of that system was so strong that it was difficult to deal with it in detail. It was hard to see where reform was to begin, or where it was to end. Reforming efforts ended in a sense of hopeless weariness; but one truth became apparent, that reform was only possible by returning to the principles of sound learning.

It was just this principle that was applied in the changes made in the English Church in the sixteenth century. It was not that England alone possessed the necessary learning; that learning and its conclusions had long been the common property of serious and thoughtful men. But England had the unique opportunity of applying it calmly and dispassionately. In foreign countries the Reformation movement was inextricably mingled with grave political disturbances. It wore a revolutionary aspect. It needed popular leaders whose opinions were necessarily coloured by the conflict in which they were engaged. The new theology had to be adapted to the purpose of attack and defence. This was not the case in England. There was no great leader whose personality impressed itself upon the changes that were made. There was no motive to attend to anything save the long record of the aspirations of sound learning. Our Prayer Book is the standing record of the result of this process. It is sometimes said that the Prayer Book is unduly exalted and extolled. This only means that while individually we might suggest additions or alterations in points of detail, there is no advance of learning

which modifies the general principles, with reference to which its work, as a whole, was done. There is no body of opinion which could, on the grounds of knowledge, suggest any material alterations.

What was the work which this learning had to do at the Reformation? It was the removal from the system of the Church of a mass of accretions which had grown round it, through its constant desire to meet the demands of popular devotion. It is an entirely wrong view to suppose that the Church of the Middle Ages went astray through the desire of the priesthood to grasp at power. Doubtless every man loves power, and every man tends to magnify his office; but power comes from doing what people want, and so long as people are satisfied, they do not keenly criticise the nature of the authority which gives them satisfaction. Curiosity is common to all men, and is applied to all subjects—especially to those which are of the greatest practical importance. It has always been difficult to preserve the Truth which God has made known to us from the desire of man to expand it to meet his own requirements.

The clergy were soon exposed to this temptation, which they were not strong enough to resist. It requires a great deal of knowledge to be able to answer a question by saying 'I do not know'; and this answer is never satisfactory to the enquirer. I remember, when I was at Cambridge, being told by the Secretary of the University Extension Lectures, that he had received a request from a local secretary, that a better lecturer might be sent for the next Session. He wrote in reply that their present lecturer was the best man at his disposal, and he

enquired the cause of dissatisfaction. The answer was that after one of his lectures he was asked a question, and answered, 'I do not know.' 'Now,' went on the local secretary, 'we do not want a man who does not know.' I quote this to show you how permanent and universal is the human desire to have its curiosity satisfied in all subjects, and how constant is the temptation to all teachers to pass beyond the bounds of knowledge and indulge in more or less plausible hypotheses.

Let us apply this consideration to the contents of the Christian Faith. Men often speak of the dogmas of the Church, as if they were deliberate attempts to impose certain arbitrary interpretations upon the truth contained in Scripture. The fact is just the opposite: they are the result of attempts to protect the historic record of the Gospel from arbitrary interpretations suggested by current modes of thought. The Creeds are brief statements of facts, against endeavours to explain those facts away.

Inside the Church the danger was, not that the Faith should be dissolved into speculation, but that additions should be made to it, beyond that amount of knowledge which God had thought fit to give. We see this curiosity in our Lord's time and we see His mode of dealing with it. When one said unto Him, 'Lord, are there few that be saved?' He answered, 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate.' Enough knowledge was given to direct individual effort and guide the individual life. More knowledge on such a point would only have weakened the motive power of effort. So it is in all things; we know enough for our real good; we are bound to

believe that more knowledge would not be really useful for us.

The source of corruption in the Church came from a disregard of this great principle. It was natural for men to ask questions; it was natural for the Church to give an answer. The Church as a teacher did not remember that it is one thing to explain the Truth, and another thing to add to it. It erred through too great kindness, too great appreciation of the frailty of human nature. It answered questions till it had to justify its proceedings, and did so by a theory of development. I can illustrate the principles of this process from a sermon which I heard a few years ago in Cologne Cathedral. The subject was the honour due to the Blessed Virgin. The preacher told a story of a lady who was teaching her child to pray. When he had repeated after his mother, 'Our Father, which art in Heaven,' he looked up and said, 'Have I only a Father in Heaven and not a mother?' 'Yes,' was the answer, 'you have a mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary.' 'Now,' said the preacher triumphantly, 'what could a Protestant have said in answer to that child's question?' He considered this a conclusive argument. You will observe that this implies not only that there must be an answer to every question, but that the answer must be of the kind which the questioner expects and desires. It was precisely this conception that lay at the bottom of the theory of theological development.

In such a process the first step is the only important one. The first slight addition that is permitted can easily be extended by logical acuteness. Let us take an instance. There is no subject on which

curiosity is more natural than the condition of the departed. Our Lord tells us that after death the souls of the faithful are in God's keeping, and the souls of the wicked are in a state of punishment waiting the final judgment. Imagination was allowed to frame a picture, the details of which were rapidly filled in, till Dante could appeal to a current conception so strong as to admit of artistic accuracy. The process of purgation was assumed and defined. The duration of purgatory was estimated, and modes of remission were devised, which might be vicarious. Little by little a vast framework grew up, reducing at every step spiritual conceptions to mechanical observances, till the conscience of mankind rose against the system which had been carefully reared to meet its own demands. If we take any other point in the corruption of the Church, we would find in like manner that it came from a desire to meet the exigencies of popular devotion, and accommodate the Truth to the requirements of the troubled conscience.

The problem set before the leaders of our Church in the sixteenth century was to disentangle essential truth from the mass of opinion which had gathered around it. This opinion was supported by the claim of the ecclesiastical organisation, not only to bear witness to the Truth, but to explain it and amplify it, and incorporate successive explanations and amplifications with the Truth itself. The process of dividing accurately between the Truth and the accretions which had grown round it was one which needed considerable care, and could only be done by the principles of what I have called sound learning. These principles apply,

not only to theology, but to every other subject. The first step of any enquirer after truth is to consider carefully the material with which he is dealing, and the evidence which is available. He must reject specious hypotheses, however attractive they may be. I do not say that he may not cherish them for his own delectation, but he must distinguish clearly between what is proved and what he finds it helpful for himself to hold as an aid to his speculations. But truth itself must be regarded with supreme veneration as something not to be impaired by the limitations of the individual enquirer. As regards the Christian Faith, the evidence is contained in Scripture and in Scripture only. Good men may explain it, and may use it to answer those questions which the mind of man is continually asking about the mystery of its destiny; but sound learning dictates that 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.' This, which I have called the method of sound learning, is the fundamental principle of the Church of England.

It was urged that the reference to Scripture meant an appeal to private judgment. In fact, beside a clear statement of the nature of the evidence applicable, it is necessary in every subject to state also the principles of interpretation. The Church of England refers to the 'decent order of the ancient Fathers'; that is to say, the methods of the primitive Church.

This is no arbitrary method of interpretation—it

is a principle of criticism which is universally adopted. If a man wishes to understand Dante, he can only do so by largely reading the history and the thought of his time. If we wish to understand any author, we must know the ideas of those to whom he immediately addressed himself, the sense in which they would naturally interpret his language, and the practical application which they made of his principles. I do not say that this by any means exhausts the meaning of his message; but we must understand thus much in the first instance.

Reference to primitive times is particularly valuable for the interpretation of Scripture; for we tend to approach Scripture with prepossessions of our own. It has been the object of much misrepresentation; it has suffered from manifold controversies. Our minds, in fact, are somewhat sophisticated, and we need to step into a freer atmosphere. We go to primitive times that we may acquire a primitive attitude of mind and a primitive temper. I think that if the contents of the Prayer Book be carefully studied from this point of view, it is astonishing how primitive they are. They are singularly free from the stains of controversy; they aim only at setting forth the Truth in its purity and in its due proportion.

As a consequence of this, the Church of England puts to one side all that is irrelevant; it shuns definitions about questions which arose from mere human curiosity; it is chary of denials in matters where affirmation and denial are alike impossible. It was the defect of one side of the Reformation on the Continent that in its arduous struggle against error it followed error on to its own ground and wasted its

strength in passionate denials. There is a danger in confounding the maintenance of truth with combating error; the two things should be kept separate. If someone makes an unwarrantable assertion, all that I am justified in doing is to point out that he has no sufficient grounds for making it. In a matter where there is no evidence for certain knowledge, it does not follow that the denial of his assertion is any truer than the assertion itself. Disregard of this consideration has been a source of weakness to some systems. They have followed error to its own sphere and have tried to build up a counter system instead of developing the Truth itself in a larger system which excluded error by excluding the grounds on which it rested. It is this which has led to a misunderstanding of the term Protestant. There is a distinction between putting error to one side and holding the Truth in peace, and the method of continually attacking error by negative assertions without any adequate affirmations to take their place. The Church of England avoided this danger: it does not indulge in negations, but aims at setting forth the Truth in a simple and dignified system.

It is this characteristic which has led to the groundless assertion that the Church of England expresses a compromise. Sound learning must always wear the appearance of a compromise between ignorance and plausible hypothesis. The human mind tends to think that because it asks a question, there must be an answer; because it raises a problem, there must be a solution. It is the function of learning to assert what is known, and to leave perverse ingenuity steadily alone. There is always a sphere for human

questionings and human ingenuity. Learning may be sympathetic and may feel that excursions into the region of the unknown often result in fruitful suggestions ; but none the less the Truth has to be guarded for what it is.

Let me apply this to the long controversy about the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Church of England sets aside two opinions on this point.

(1) 'It is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves, one to another, but rather is a Sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death . . . a partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ.'

(2) 'Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture.'

What is the real nature of the controversy to which these two statements refer? Christians do not differ about the importance of the Sacrament, its value, or the spiritual benefit which it conveys ; they do not differ about what is essential for the Rite itself, if we put aside the question of the Christian Ministry. They differ about the mode in which the outward elements become the vehicle of the Spiritual Grace. Can this question be answered? Is it for man's good that it should be answered? The Church of England, resting upon sound learning, refuses to go beyond the words of Scripture and the practice of the Early Church. It defends the record of Scripture against two unwarrantable attempts to gratify man's curiosity, and leaves the Rite itself as it was left by our Lord. There is no compromise here, there is a

mere reference to the nature of the evidence. If men choose to indulge in speculation on such a point, they do so for themselves and at their own risk; they must not claim to have their speculations incorporated into the system of the Church.

Such an attitude may doubtless seem to some minds cold and unsatisfactory; but where God has not spoken, man must keep silence. It is one duty of the Church to maintain the Divine reserve, and to uphold the Divine wisdom, against the specious demands of even the noblest forms of purely human emotion.

On the same principles the Church of England dealt with ecclesiastical discipline. It retained the framework of the primitive system, discarding those minute applications in points of detail which had robbed that system of its educational value. There were no precise definitions of the modes of observing the methods which had been found useful for training the Christian soul. The need of an opportunity for guidance by the unquiet, the scrupulous, and the doubtful was recognised in cases of necessity; but the primary responsibility was left with the individual to make his peace with God. In all matters punctiliousness about trifles was avoided. The appeal was made to conscience. Weight was given to instruction. The pastoral side of the priestly office was restored to due prominence. The method of our Lord's teaching was put before a mechanical appliance of His merits. In short, the Church of England was to be the Church of free men, educating them into a knowledge of the 'liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free.'

Similarly the services of the Church were brought back to their early simplicity; the time-honoured structure was retained, and its system was made 'agreeable to the mind and purpose of the Old Fathers.' Ceremonies were judged by the standard of order and intelligibility; the Services were to be stately and dignified, and the ceremonies were to be such 'that every man may understand what they do mean, and to what use they do serve.' They were to be an accompaniment to, and an explanation of, the revised Services, not an attempt to impose upon those Services a meaning which was not their own.

I have spoken so far about the position of the Church of England as set forth in its formularies. There is another point with reference to which it has to be judged. Every ecclesiastical system stands in close relationship to the life of the people, which it undertakes to train in the knowledge of God. It has to be judged to some extent with reference to the type of character which it aims at creating and maintaining. We all know the type of character which, however imperfectly it may be realised by the individual, still floats before our minds as the ideal, which we wish national life to express. The English ideal is that of a serious-minded, resolute, independent man loving justice, making for righteousness, strong in the fear of God. It is a great thing to possess such a national ideal. It will be said that its formation is not due to the unaided influence of the Church of England. I fully admit that it is the product of English Christianity, wrought out in some degree by the antagonisms which the system of the Church

provoked; but it was the principles of that Church in themselves which created the new life of England in the sixteenth century. The question of their further extension only emphasised their inherent power. It is hard for us now to realise the enormous gulf which separates the England of Henry VIII. from the England of Elizabeth. A stride was unconsciously taken into a new sphere of ideas, which liberated human energies, created new aspirations, indicated new possibilities, and revealed dormant qualities which then sprang into conscious being. We may regret that this new life was too full to be retained within the limits of one system. Rulers in Church and State alike were afraid of its manifold activities, and of the disintegrating power of new ideas on a people whose training had made such a rapid advance. The rulers had to learn by experience the new qualities of the people. The only use to make of past mistakes is to accept their lessons. It is always difficult to choose between the apathy of indifference and the exuberance of excessive vitality. There is a temptation, when oppressed by one, to long for the other. But there can be no doubt which is preferable. Englishmen of the present day have learnt, I hope, to make the best of the robustness of the English character, even when they find it for their own purposes excessive.

Perhaps we may all agree that we have reached a point in the development of the national character when its sterling qualities are sufficiently assured. Our task in the future is to impart to the strength of our national character some of the finer elements which up to the present have not been unduly culti-

vated. I may be prejudiced in my opinion, but I think that the system of the Church affords the best means for adding still more to our national character those qualities which it has ever striven to impart, and which the tendency of our national growth makes it increasingly necessary that we should acquire. Let me point out some of the ways in which this is done. First, the Church is a great witness to the continuity of national life, and the method of the Divine training of our race. It raises a constant protest against excessive self-assertion, against unbridled individualism; it urges the claims of corporate life as supreme. Secondly, the system of its Services maintains the due proportion of Christian truth, and so preserves an even balance of the mind, which is especially needful when the growing complexity of society tends to make men fix their attention on particular points, and follow individual teachers in particular causes, disregarding their relation to the social fabric as a whole. Thirdly, the dignified language of the Prayer Book sets a standard of reverence which in the present day it is specially necessary to maintain. Fourthly, the system of the Church affords adequate, but not undue, scope for those powers of æsthetic perception which cannot be repressed without impairing the fulness of human nature. Any system which aims at developing character in its completeness must pay due regard to the balance of qualities wherewith that nature has been endowed by its Creator. The whole of man has to be claimed for Christ, and purified and sanctified by His Spirit. The co-ordination of these qualities so as to work harmoniously for the highest

purpose of man's being is an object which cannot be neglected.

This Church of England has borne a great part in the making of the English people. It has spread over a vast Empire, and is indissolubly associated with human progress. It is exposed to exceptional dangers, owing to its high standard. It requires of all its sons a conscious effort to raise themselves to the level of the demands which it makes upon their intelligence. It forges no fetters ; it knows no mechanical system ; it does not impair the responsibility of the individual soul. It sets forth the Truth of Christ with that austere grace in which alone truth can be clothed. It makes no compromises with transient modes of thought or passing phases of popular desire. It is the system which above all others has the promise of the future, if we are right in supposing that the future will be more and more guided by an intelligent pursuit of truth and righteousness.

The great danger of the present day is lest the aspirations of the highest minds, profoundly Christian and profoundly moral, should desert all ecclesiastical systems, because they are stereotyped by the remnants of ancient controversies and present suspicions, because they are unable to move freely and face the real work which they are called upon to do. This danger is intensified by ignoble struggles about matters of detail, conducted without reference to great principles. This gradual alienation of thoughtful minds from the system of the Church has occurred in other countries, with lamentable results to the national life. We of the Church of England are still in close touch with the vigorous life of a great

people. It behoves us to realise the greatness of our opportunity, and to work together in the cause of God's Truth on the basis of a frank and loyal acceptance of those principles which I have endeavoured to set before you—the principles which guided our forefathers in the past, and have lost none of their ancient virtue.

So far I spoke in addresses which I have been giving throughout my diocese. I was anxious to put forward general principles, and not to imperil such effect as my words might have by reference to the details of present controversy. Good understanding can only come from a general acceptance of definite principles in the first instance. I think it well to go a step further, and make some attempt to discover more precisely than has yet been done what are some causes of the present disquiet, and what are the principles underlying them.

(1) There has been an attempt, on purely missionary grounds, to adapt the Services of the Church to what were supposed to be the needs of the people; to make the Services more pointed, to emphasise certain aspects of them, in some cases to expand and in other cases to narrow their scope. It is with reference to this that I have called attention to the danger of interpreting popular demands and taking them too exclusively as a guide.

(2) Along with this there has been in a few cases a tendency to introduce teaching on subjects which were omitted in the revision of the Prayer Book. I have pointed out the difference between the Truth of God and human hypotheses which have been added

to it. We stand, and must always stand, upon what God has made known to us. This must not be obscured by speculation about outlying subjects which tends to obscure great central truths.

(3) There has been a desire to give greater dignity to the Services of the Church as a part of public life. This is entirely a question of degree, and might be discussed by itself as a matter of common sense, which it is undesirable to mix up with any theological considerations whatever.

(4) There has been a desire to break down, somewhat too precipitately, the barriers of our insularity by emphasising the points of resemblance between the system of the English Church and that of foreign Churches. I do not wish to discuss the wisdom of this attempt; but it accounts for the use of phraseology which has excited suspicion, and which I think very unwise. It is enough for me to point out that the desire to be on better terms with our neighbours cannot be accomplished by any sacrifice of our own principles. Other peoples must clearly understand what we are, and what we mean, before we can profitably discuss the question of more friendly relationship.

If these are some of the broader aspects of the motives which have led to changes, it is well to consider the general grounds on which the opposition to them rests.

(1) It is necessary that there should be a recognisable type of the Anglican Services, so that worshippers may not be confused by the multiplicity of variations. Habit counts for much in human nature. In a time when people move about so much, it is perplexing to find marked variations in the rendering of

the Services. We must have a clear understanding about the limits of permissible variation.

(2) There is a dim consciousness that some of the methods which have been employed come perilously near to the inauguration of a new system of theological development backwards, with all its accompanying dangers. All ground for this fear must be removed.

(3) Unwise attempts to revive ecclesiastical discipline on arbitrary lines have led to a fear lest a new type of character should be produced, lacking in that robustness which Englishmen rightly prize. This is a point which more than any other comes home to every Englishman's heart. He cannot sympathise with punctiliousness about trifles, with excessive scrupulosity, with practices which rest on authority and not on the reason of the thing. This, I think, is at the bottom of his dread of sacerdotalism. He will not endure an ecclesiastical system which pursues small objects of its own apart from their connection with the great stream of national life. This seems to me to be the primary consideration which all have to face, and only the frank acceptance of it will restore lasting peace.

(4) Things have been done, on principles which seemed to imply that the system of the Church of England could be supplemented at will, and that the authority of the officers of the Church of England could be overruled by an appeal to some more binding authority, the secret nature of which was apparently locked up in the bosom of the individual recalcitrant. This entirely impossible position must be frankly abandoned.

I am aware that perfect peace and agreement cannot come at once, or indeed ever in this imperfect world; but those who are dealing with the highest interests of man may at least avoid conscious misrepresentation and appeals to prejudice. If controversy is inevitable, it should be about principles and not about petty details. We need not unduly regret a crisis which compels us to think more seriously and to weigh the tendency of our actions, not only as they appear in our own eyes, but in their relation to the religious life of our country as a whole.



